# THE WEEKLY MONITOR.

VOL. I. PHILADELPHIA, JUNE 16, 1804. No. 1.

PUBLISHED BY ABR. VICKERS, AT NO. 77, NORTH THIRD STREET, WHERE SUBSCRIPTIONS AND LITERARY COMMUNICATIONS (*post paid*), WILL BE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED.

## PROSPECTUS
OF THE
## *WEEKLY MONITOR.*

THE WEEKLY MONITOR will be a publication devoted to literature, morality and useful philosophy; having for its object, the diffusion of such knowledge as is calculated to enlighten the understanding, improve the mind and promote the general good of society. It is intended to impress upon the minds of youth, the important advantages resulting from a preservation of their native simplicity and innocence; and to represent to those of riper years, the necessity of a conformity to those moral and physical laws which were designed to establish that order and harmony which constitutes the proper habitude of man. Connected with these objects, and for the purpose of instructing and amusing the reader, various Miscellaneous pieces, original and selected from new publications and works of merit, will be introduced; also remarkable occurrences in the moral and political worlds:—Observations on health and long life; improvements in arts, sciences, agriculture, &c. &c.

Particular care will be taken not to injure the feelings of any respectable body of people, either religious or political.

### CONDITIONS.

1. The *Weekly Monitor* shall be printed on a strong durable paper, with a good type, of which this first number is a specimen.

2. It will be published on every Seventh day of the week, in 4 pages large quarto.

3. The price will be TWO DOLLARS a year payable every *three months*. Subscribers in the country to pay in advance.

### *The Evidence of Relation between our Present existence and Future State.—With references to Dr. Paley's Natural Theology.*

THE world must be ever indebted to the author of "Natural Theology," for that excellent work, which, after having gratified the mind on many important points, with most extraordinary ability, yet leaves it unsatisfied, and indeed uninformed, with regard to one of great moment; viz. the relation between our present life and that state which is to succeed it, or (to form a *question* of the matter), whether the consciousness incident to our present existence will continue unimpaired in the future? or, whether the consciousness that shall be incident to our future state, will arise (by an *original* constitution) upon an absolute oblivion of the past?

It must be evident, that all that can be drawn with regard to the subject, must be from the analogy and necessity of things. We can have no direct evidence, in one point of view, because there is no immediate and decisive relation established between the two states; at least none evident to our senses. What, then, we have in the way of illustration or elucidation, must come from the constitution and circumstances of our present existence.

Our present existence itself is evidently relative; since, without it, each moment of time would be independent, as it were, in itself; and, consequently, were there not connexion by relation, each moment of our lives would be a new and an entire existence. We should be strangers to ourselves; and the thoughts of our evening cares would be lost and dead to the memory of our morning pursuits.

It is by the relation between good and evil that we are enabled to judge of our actions. In fact, it is relation in all things, that marks out their several and separate qualities; for were they independent of one another, or if some only were independent, we should be dead to the qualities of such so unrelatively situated; because, by one quality it is that we are enabled to judge of another. Thus with regard to taste: it is by relation that the bitter points out the sweet; that the acid establishes the alkali; that the acrid leads us to the mild. Thus also it is with regard to sight, to hearing, or with regard, in short, to all nature. Relation is the prevailing monitor of distinctions; or otherwise the eye would be dead to the properties of light and shade; the ear dull to the variations of sound; or touch insensible to variety, whether we grasped a ball of fire or a ball of ice; whether we pressed a flint or a feather. Our sense would be equally stupid to gravitation as to levity; equally ignorant in appreciating the power of attraction as incapable of shewing the relative bearance of the repulsive principle.

It is by the relation which bodies bear to each other, whether hard or soft, solid or aeriform, that we are made sensible to all the varied states of existence in nature. Without this relation we should not be able to discern the varieties presented by the elements. In fact, without relation, nature would be blank, because no discrimination of things could possibly exist.

When we apply this relation to our own immediate nature, or to the human mind more particularly, we find it bear equally as strong as when connected with our perceptions of external existence. In the application, however, not equally mechanical, in this point of view, that such relation, for example, with regard to external existence, was necessary as a medium of intelligence for converse, connected with our present state. But the relation of our minds with regard to good and evil affections, and their nature altogether, is by no means to be viewed as *merely* necessary for our present state, but, on the contrary, as intimately connected with our future one.

Nothing affords a stronger argument in its way, than the mechanism of nature. Of this we have ample proof in the "Theology;" but a mechanical intent is lost beyond the limits of circumscribed accommodation. The conveniencies of the body, and the attributes of the mind, are points *widely* different. The mechanism of the hand proves the wisdom and goodness of the Designer, yet still the purposes of its creation are evidently circumscribed as a medium of

local accommodation on this side the grave; but the spirit which animates it to noble deeds knows no bounds, neither is it circumscribed by any reason of necessity; nor is there any reason whatever to imagine, that the mind itself, as a being, will ever undergo a total change of its existence, but merely an enlargement of its sphere of action. The changes it has to pass are those of improvement only. New worlds will enlarge and perfect its mode of thinking; and its joys will increase in proportion as new fields open to the delights of contemplative adoration. The idea of time-serving qualities of the mind appears to be incompatible with its being. To use a familiar comparison, as well might that man be called a time-serving being to the city or place where he is confined by the necessity of circumstance, although he means to quit that city or place for another of greater advantage, whenever an opportunity shall offer. Now although a man be confined by circumstance to a place, no one can say that he is more particularly calculated for that place (*because he is in it*) than any other: on the contrary, the place may not be half so convenient as another would be, though circumstances oblige him to put up with its want of accommodation. If there is any *time*-serving in the question, it is with the *place*, and not with the man—and thus it is with our present state. The world is a time-serving place, calculated for our stay till we pass to a better. In its power of comprehension and research, the mind but too often feels the narrow limits granted to it by the circumstances of this life; indeed so much so, that they would appear to serve as a temporary barrier to check the enterprize of thought penetrating too far into the expanse of its existence.

And here it is to be more lamented, that the Reverend Author of the "Theology" did not particularly treat on this head, viz. the relation of our present state by connexion to the future; as in the chapter "On the Goodness of the Deity" it would rather appear, that qualities of the mind, such as affection, &c. were appropriate *only* in particular for this life, since death is mentioned as "separation;" and then with regard to our affections, it is observed in the same chapter, "It is better we should possess affections, the sources of so many virtues and so many joys, although they be exposed to the incidents of life, as well as to the interruptions of mortality, than, by the want of them, to be reduced to a state of selfishness, apathy, and quietism."

This certainly implies a degree of compromise with this life as distinct from any other. And here also, it may be remarked, was a fair opportunity for the Author to have gratified his readers on the present head. It must be matter of regret to every one, that so interesting an enquiry was not pursued by abilities so abundantly competent, by eloquence at once so splendid and convincing.

If our affections concern our present life in a very material degree, it would appear strikingly forcible that they must have influence hereafter. It is impossible for a being of this world rationally to think of a future state independently of the present. If so, consequently those affections so intimate with his nature, and which the circumstance of death only could interrupt, must influence whatever state he may hereafter fill.

The position can easily be illustrated. It is clear that relation bears with every circumstance of this life. It must, also, be as clear, that all we can speculate upon, or know, of a future state must be drawn from conclusions on our present one. It is true a man may fancy ten thousand, or ten times ten thousand, *possible states*, and all differing from his own. Such varieties of existence may be, and a man may possibly imagine them; but he cannot apply them to himself; because it is impossible for any being to conceive a future state of himself, unconnected with his own present and immediate existence. How is it, when he has passed through the class of being of this world, that a man is to be made sensible of his existence, but by relation? a relation as intimate in spirit with his passed state as that which connects the first and last day of a month; if not, *he is dead eternally:* for what advantage is it to him, if, upon a mere general scale of animation, what quickened *him* goes to animate another?—a being as unconnected with himself as the butterfly is with the crusty shell it leaves when bursting into life.

With regard to the precise mode of such relation, it is not presumed to suggest any limit. The argument is no other than a further proof of "the Goodness of the Deity," who has so pointedly marked, with so strong a hand, the necessity of relation in this life, from which confidence is given to our nature, as a support for that change it has to undergo.

It would not be ill-judged, perhaps, to compare relation, and see how far it agrees with other general circumstances—for instance, with regard to the opinion of this life as a state of probation. The first view of the statement most forcibly shews, that relation, so far from *merely* agreeing with it, simply, in not producing any evident obstacle, is, on the contrary, so necessary to it, that the idea of probation must be given up, if relation be not admitted. It is only through the aid of such a medium that we can possibly be made sensible how far this state of trial has answered or not. If one is established, the other must be admitted from necessity. It is impossible that a man can render up a charge of trust, and account for its several circumstances, without a knowledge *of such trust*—nor does it admit of a question, that he can be made sensible of the reward depending on such trust, or be made conscious of the errors he has been guilty of, without an intimate knowledge of his own agency. Therefore it must be from necessity, whatever time it may be, however distant or however near, that a just settlement *can only* be had by the possession of *all* the facts relative to the time of trust. And this most correctly and forcibly applies to the relation between our present being and future state.

It would appear, then, that relation between this life and our future state would be positively and exclusively necessary, on the common ground of the Christian doctrine of probation, and be equally extendible to the doctrine of future rewards and punishments; since without it the horrid assassin of his race could never be made sensible of his enormities, nor could he who received indemnity for persecution be made sensible that he had ever been persecuted.

However low our nature may be, on a comparative scale with other beings, yet undoubtedly we have that within us (however encumbered with the shackles of mortality) which speaks a tendency to infinite intellectual comprehension. It would seem to be to the mind an unerring constellation of light to guide it through those difficulties and dangers which maze it on every side.

The concurrence of this quality, freed from the clouds and darkness of prejudice, is the best proof we can have that a thing is right: and the mind would appear to have an irresistible inclination in its constitution to this concurrence, with regard to relation. It cannot for a mo-

ment ponder on existence without it; its best joys spring from it; by it the whole and each part of its being is preserved, mingled, and regulated. In retrospection, what a fund of enjoyment does relation present! In short, if memory were barren of it, how isolated and poor would our present being be! It is only for us to let the vigorous idea shoot into futurity, to conceive that which is called death to be no other than a little sounder *sleep*. We see the man sink into its slumbers. But deprive him of the consciousness of relation, What will his *waking* existence be? That against which "All Nature cries aloud"—that which bears with it "Secret dread and inward horror"—that at which "The soul shrinks back upon herself, and startles at—destruction."

If relation does not bear throughout, the *whole* of our existence is, at best, a mere compact of policy, negatively pleasurable. But it is repugnant to nature to admit for a moment, that the ardent affection of a mother dies with her last benediction, or that the united bond of faith between man and wife, given under the hand and seal of Nature herself, is cancelled in the hour of death.

It is relation only that preserves our state from the mere instinctive affection of brutality. What can be stronger than instinctive affection whilst it lasts? In what instance is human attachment superior? In none. On the contrary, it has only rationality and duration to save it from inferiority.

In the "Natural Theology," our affections would appear to be too much blended with animal instincts; or, at any rate, sufficient distinction is not made, so that they may be held in separate points of view. Any one following the same line of reasoning as is observed in pages 536 and 537 of the "Theology," must be entangled in the same confusion. Human affections and animal instincts are there considered, as it were, under one head. Though in page 537 it is observed, that "the pertinacity of human sorrow is probably, in some measure, connected with the qualities of our rational and moral nature." The probability here undoubtedly amounts to a *certainty*. Human *sorrow* is governed and proportioned by *human affection:* in fact, *sorrow* is *affection*. The sorrows of Cato were his *affections* for Rome. And I hope and trust that no mechanical reasoning will ever, for a moment, be the means of blending such godlike magnanimity with the time-serving affections of brutal instinct.

There may be difficulties thrown in the way of relation to shew its inapplication. In different states it may have different modes of application, suited and adapted to purposes then necessary; but the difficulty, or the impossibility, in our present confined state, of sorting and applying of relation, is no proof against the necessity of its existence, in abstract. The thing must be, however, altered, fashioned, and applied, it may be to the necessities of futurity, by the wisdom of an all-seeing Providence.

## THOUGHTS ON HAPPINESS.

Much has been said, at different periods of the world, on the subject of human happiness. Many expedients have been formed, by ingenious speculatists, for the attainment of this sublunary felicity; various have been the plans proposed, to facilitate the acquisition of this phantom of the imagination; as if it were possible for the powers of the human intellect to remain stationary, under any situation we can be placed in. Corporeal gratifications, we all know, are of transient duration, and to many of them, even those accounted the most exquisitely pleasing, not only satiety, but disgust and langour succeed.

Intellectual enjoyments (which are certainly the most alluring) are evanescent and fleeting; seldom affording that pleasing gratification that our sanguine expectations vainly anticipated. It may naturally be demanded what is the cause of this grievous disappointment?

There appears to be many cogent reasons, why the mind never enjoys unmixed felicity in this state of existence; the principal one however is, that we are too apt to promise ourselves greater degrees of happiness, than the nature of things can possibly bestow; when we are in pursuit of any promising gratification, we generally contemplate it in an abstract sense, as not being connected with contingent concomitants. We readily grant, that, in general, all human joys are imperfect: but do not we entertain a kind of mental reservation in favour of our own sagacity and prudence? Are we not apt to suppose that, in the general mode of human conduct, men frustrate the end of gratifications, by some mischievous injudicious management, for which they only are culpable; but which we trust our nicer judgment will turn to a better account.

The various ways by which the vanity of man deceives him, and counteracts even his best resolutions, are so numerous, that no person in any degree acquainted with himself, will deny, that, on many occasions, he has conceived thoughts of his own superior prudence and discretion, that he would be ashamed to own. That these mistaken conclusions in our own favour, are among the many eccentricities of the human mind, most persons will doubtless admit: and from this single circumstance we have been led to form fallacious notions of the nature of human happiness. It would be arrogant in me, not to acknowledge, that I have been repeatedly deluded in the participation of intellectual gratifications, by expecting a greater degree of satisfaction from them than the nature of things will admit.

For the consolation and encouragement of young persons, who wish to fill up the measure of their duty in social life; it is but just to inform them, that if they preserve themselves untainted by vice, which is constantly holding forth its illusive joys, they may find, in the intervals of their leisure moments, harmless amusements that will leave no sting behind them. Youth, full of gay thoughts and pleasing expectations, imagine that they will find, in a full scope of exquisite gratifications, as much happiness in a few months, as, in the usual gradation of human pleasures, are experienced in a whole age. The modern man of pleasure supposes, that the *Old Put*, his father, does not know how to enjoy life; his grave admonitions, (the fruits of many years observations and experience) are considered as *stale maxims*, resulting from a total incapacity of enjoying life. Thus deluded by his own vanity, and the empty applause of raw boys, he rushes into every scene of dissipation, ruins his constitution, his reputation, and his fortune.

To the Young men of the age, I would further observe, that if they cultivate the habits of virtue, they will not, in the end, have just cause to declare that all is vanity; and "that life is a bubble;" for he who lives agreeably to nature, (that is, to virtue) lives happily; and he whose life has been spent in useful pursuits, cannot be said to have *lived in vain*. Innocent pleasures will be the attendants of virtue, as pain, remorse, and misery, are the natural consequences of vice.

*As the following very remarkable case of a woman, the daughter of James Chaffin, of Chester county, has I believe, never been published, an account thereof cannot be unacceptable to our readers.*

THIS woman is about forty years of age, and was born and reared in her father's house, and yet has never been heard to speak to him, but converses freely with any other person. When she was a child her father used to persuade, threaten and try every method that he could invent, to induce her to speak to him, but they were all ineffectual:—she is not deficient in filial duty, but says, that when she attempts to speak to him, she has no power of utterance, this is the only reason that she can assign for her extraordinary taciturnity. The family were well known to the editor; they used to live about four miles from Downing's Town, but have some years since, removed to the Western country.

### THE ROSE.

Gay ornament of early day,
Wash'd by aurora's freshest dew,
Sweet lovely rose, to thee I pay
The homage to thy beauty due.

When venus first to bless the earth
Decended from celestial bowers,
She breath'd of love, and gave thee birth,
To flourish with the morning hours.

Thus sprang on earth the heavenly flower,
Exhaling joy as when above,
And from its soft and magic power,
We named it the flower of love.

Sacred to youth and female charms,
Breathing delight, it wafts its sweets,
The fair-one's breast with rapture warms
And oft her tender bosom greets.

Awake sweet virgins, quickly come
And taste the early sweets of morn,
Thro' Flora's gay dominion roam,
And with her charms your own adorn.

As in her dewy walks the fair
Mid nature's field for pleasure seeks,
The healthful walk and fragrant air
Shall paint fresh roses on her cheeks.

Then rise, my love, aurora now
Her roseate light begins to shed,
Come pluck the rose and pay the vow,
Ere yet the morn's soft shades are fled.

### ON CONTENTMENT.

Content transcends a crown; 'tis wisdom's mark,
Choice manna, treasur'd in Religion's ark,
An olive branch, brought in a turtle's bill;
An anchor, which at sea secures us still;
A calm in storms; a peace where wars invade;
In frost, a sunshine; and in heat, a shade;
That high-tun'd harmony for which we long,
A sweet preludium to a heavenly song;
The heart's bright ruby, which, with this endu'd
Shines like a star of the first magnitude.

LAVINIA SOPHIA G.

### THE RETURN TO SCHOOL.

Aurora's golden beams appear,
And gayly light the chambers round
But not as they were wont to cheer
Three youths, just woke from sleep profound,
To all the horrors of the day
That bears them far from home away.

Too punctual Sarah banish'd sleep,
And all its soft composing train,
Soon as the day began to peep,
And farther hope of rest is vain:
The chaise arriv'd, the horses wait,
And school-boys must submit to fate.

Slowly and silently they dress;
No gay remark the lips escapes;
Nor is it difficult to gues
How fancy in a thousand shapes,
Home's gladsome scenes presents to view,
And sicken at the near adieu.

Around the breakfast table see
A mournful group at length appear:
One sister pours the fragrant tea,
While all scarce hide the starting tear:
But tea, nor butter'd toast, inspire
Hunger's sharp pang, or raise desire.

Nor let fastidious minds condemn
The sorrows of that trying hour;
Tho' 'tis fair science beckons them
Back to her academic bower,
Nature's warm feelings ever speak
Louder than Latin or than Greek.

Swift fly the moments, 'till, at length,
The last, the parting one appears;
Now, parents, summon all your strength,
And veil in smiles the pang that tears:
And thus on weaker minds bestow
An ease yourselves can scarcely know.

The hasty kiss, th' affected smile,
The firmness, feign'd where least 'tis felt;
The servants gather'd round the while,
Whose colder bosoms seem to melt:
All these th' attentive muse has seen
Complete the interesting scene.

Nor blush, ye darling youths, to own
The soft emotions of the heart,
Ere yet the world, familiar grown,
Its cold indifference impart:
The pang that wounds at each adieu
Most flattering is to us and you.

### EPITAPH ON A BIRD.

Here lieth,
aged three months and four days,
the body of
RICHARD ACANTHUS,
a young person of unblemished character.
He was taken, in his callow infancy, from the wing of a tender parent,
By the rough and pitiless hand of a two-legged animal without feathers.
Though born with the most aspiring disposition and unbounded love of freedom,
he was closely confined in a grated prison,
and scarcely permitted to view those fields,
to the possession of which he had an undoubted charter.
Deeply sensible of this infringement of his natural and unalienable rights,
he was often heard to petition for redress,
not with rude and violent clamours,
but in the most plaintive notes of harmonious sorrow!
At length tired with fruitless efforts to escape,
his indignant soul
burst the prison which his body could not,
and left a lifeless heap of beauteous feathers.
Reader!
if suffering innocence can hope for retribution,
deny not to the gentle shade of this unfortunate captive,
the humble, though uncertain, hope of animating some happier form;
or, trying his new-fledged pinions
in some happier elysium, beyond the reach of MAN,
the tyrant of this lower world!

PRINTING
IN ITS VARIOUS BRANCHES,
EXECUTED BY
JOSEPH RAKESTRAW,
*No. 95, North Third-street, Philadelphia*